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This Supplement consists of a VERBATIM Report, specially drawn up for "India," of the Debates on Indian subjects in both Houses of Parliament, and questions put on such subjects and the answers given to them, arranged chronologically, from February 24th to March 24th.

Imperial Parliament.

February 24th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE SIAM AGREEMENT.

Mr. YERBURGH asked the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of Article VI. of the Franco-Chinese Convention of 20th June, 1895, the Government of India would take steps for the connexion of their telegraph system with that of China at Isumao, that of Siam at Kiang Hsen, and that of French Indo-China in the region of the Upper Mekong:

Whether, in view of the Anglo-French Agreement of 15th January last, which, by guaranteeing the independence of the portion of Siam through which the route of the projected Burma-Siam China Railway runs, had removed all political obstacles to the construction of the said railway through Siam, the Government of India would enter into arrangements with the Government of Siam for the execution out of Government revenue of such surveys and estimates by railway engineers of the sections of the said projected railway lying within their respective territories as were necessary for placing the line upon the market, or for the construction of the portions of the railway lying in their respective territories by the Governments concerned:

And whether, in view of the French railway projects for tapping the trade of South-Western China at Isumao, the Government of India would have explorations conducted and surveys made of the most feasible routes for connecting the Burmese seaport of Rangoon with Isumao, so that the best route for a railway might be selected, and whether it would, on the completion of such surveys and explorations, either itself undertake the construction of the said railway or facilitate its construction by private enterprise.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I have no information of an intention on the part of the Government of India to extend their Burmese telegraph system beyond its present terminus at Kieng Tung in the directions indicated in my hon. friend's question.

The Government of India has not expressed any intention of entering into arrangements for construction of the lines of railway suggested in the second and third paragraphs of the question. Without entering into any discussion of the matters suggested by the form of my hon. friend's question, I may observe that until the Kunlong ferry line is completed, and the Siam Government has had time to consider its railway policy, any serious discussion of a Burma-Siam China line to Sumao appears to me premature.

ARMY PENSIONS.

Mr. M. McCARTAN asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the case of a pensioner named Edward Kenney, now residing in Poitiers, France, who, having served twenty-one years and eight months in the Worcestershire Regiment, including active service in the Indian Mutiny and a long service in the Colonies, was discharged on life pension in October, 1878, whether he had been refused continuance of his pension because he was residing in France? And whether he would make enquiry into the matter, with the view of having his pension continued to him now in his old age.

Mr. BRODRICK: This man has not been refused his pension, though it appears that he has not applied for the amount due last quarter. As he is over fifty years of age, residence abroad does not disqualify him for its receipt. He should apply in the usual course to his paymaster.

Mr. T. W. LEGH asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether any compensation would be given to the mother of Lieutenant Wroughton, who lost his life in the collision between French and English troops at Waima, West Africa, on 23rd December, 1893; and if it was the case that the recipient of a pension from the India Office was thereby rendered ineligible for the receipt of any pension or compensation from army funds.

Mr. BRODRICK: As Mrs. Wroughton is already in receipt of a pension as the widow of an officer she is ineligible for any pension for the loss of her son. She appears to be further disqualified by not having been mainly dependent upon her son for support. It is not the case that the recipient of a pension from the India Office would necessarily be ineligible for a pension from army funds.

THE MAHARAJA OF JHALAWAR.

Mr. J. H. ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India:

1. If his attention had been called to the charges brought by the Political Agent at Jhalawar against the Máhárája Rana of that State, accompanied with a recommendation to the Viceroy for his deposition; if so, what action had been taken by the Government of India with regard to these charges;

2. Would His Highness have every opportunity afforded to him to defend himself publicly from these charges before any definite action was taken with regard to the recommendation for his deposition;

3. And would the Secretary of State lay upon the Table of the House any papers and correspondence relating to this difficulty in Jhalawar.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: My answer to the first part of the first question is in the affirmative, and to the second part, that the reports of the Political Agent as to the oppression existing have been examined on the spot by the newly-appointed Agent

to the Governor-General, whose report is under the consideration of Lord Elgin.

The Mâhârâja Rana will be allowed every opportunity of submitting his reply to these charges.

As soon as I have received the final decision of the Viceroy I will consider if papers relating to this subject can be laid upon the Table of the House.

February 25th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE SIAM AGREEMENT.

Mr. R. A. YERBURGH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, what action had been taken by the Government towards an agreement with China in order that Article IV of the Anglo-French Agreement of 15th January last relating to China, Siam, and the Mekong should not be ineffective; whether Article III of the said Anglo-French Agreement was held by Her Majesty's Government to imply that notwithstanding China's breach of Article V of the Burmo-Chinese Boundary Convention in ceding portions of the Shan State of Kian Hung to France without our permission, the remaining portions of that State were not to be reclaimed by us from China; what action had been taken by the Government for preserving our right of railway approach from our Burmese seaboard to Ssumao and for acquiring the right from China of prolonging our present projected railway across the Chinese border into China, on the same terms as had been granted by China to France in the case of present projected French railways under Article V of the Franco-Chinese Commercial Convention of 20th June, 1895; and whether Ssumao having been declared open as a treaty port by the aforesaid Franco-Chinese Convention, and a French Consul having been appointed to it, the Government would, in the exercise of their rights under the most favoured Nation Clauses of our Treaties with China, appoint a British Consul to this important emporium of trade?

Mr. GEORGE CURZON: The matters alluded to by the hon. member are at the present moment the subject of negotiations with the Chinese Government, and I am not in a position therefore to make any statement about them. As regards paragraph 2 of the question, no such inference is necessarily to be drawn.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE. HOW THEY AFFECT INDIA.

In the course of the debate on the new rules of procedure,

Dr. CLARK said: There was one great question which they could not enter into as far as he was concerned. They had home affairs, foreign affairs, and colonial affairs, but they had no estimates for India. Indian affairs could not be discussed except on a motion to leave the chair on Friday night. The result of previous attempts to take away the time of private members was to compel them to move the adjournment of the House or to bring the matters forward on the Address, and that was why in the last few years—for eight or ten years—the debate on the Address had been spun out. If they could not bring it forward in one way they would in another. So it would be again. They could always make sure of forty members, so that instead of bringing a subject up in a regular form they were driven to moving the adjournment of the House. He contended that this irregular procedure would waste more time than if a subject was brought forward in the proper manner.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN said he should like to utter a few words on behalf of the most oppressed minority in the House—the minority consisting of members who occupied themselves about Indian questions. He should like to ask the leader of the House what he was able to do for that group of members? At present they had lost their Fridays, but nothing whatever had been given to them instead. The leader of the House had promised to some of these members that they would have better opportunities in Supply of bringing forward grievances but as to Indian questions not a single item of Indian Expenditure appeared upon the Imperial Estimates. Therefore, there would be no opportunities for bringing forward Indian grievances. He must point out that those members who tried to support the cause of India really required the fullest indulgence of that House. They had no voters behind them He thought he might say that in bringing forward Indian grievances any hon. member had a difficulty and a danger to confront. The subjects were even distasteful to the House. Anyone who brought an Indian subject forward was likely to be regarded as a bore, and that was a danger at which the stoutest heart might quail. The one really valuable weapon was the power of making objection upon the Estimates.

Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. member was now going beyond the amendment.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN claimed that if Fridays were to be taken away some equivalent should be given. The way he would suggest was that the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be brought on.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not entitled to ask that Indian finance should be dealt with differently from the way in which it is now dealt with.

February 27th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SUNDAY WORK IN INDIAN MILLS.

Sir JOHN LENG asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was aware that in a number of Indian jute mills cleaning and repairs of machinery were carried on regularly on Sundays, but that in several mills the engines were stopped on Saturday afternoons for cleaning and repairs to be done, so that the gates were not opened on Sundays; and whether, apart from any legal question under the Indian Factories Acts, he would recommend the Government of India to use its influence in favour of the entire stoppage of work in the mills on Sundays, except in the case of serious accidents or other emergencies.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I have no information regarding the number of jute mills at which machinery is cleaned on Sundays. The Indian Factory Act specifically permits the examining and repairing of machinery on Sundays. Moreover, while the Act enforces one holiday a week, it permits the holiday to be on some other day than Sunday; and, according to the table published in the last "Moral and Material Progress Report," 81 of the inspected factories had their holiday on some other day of the week.

MORTALITY IN BENGAL PRISONS.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH asked the Secretary of State for India, inasmuch as the most recent official returns from Bengal showed that during the past five years, out of a daily average of 17,945 prisoners in the gaols of that Presidency there were 1,169 deaths, of which only 207 were from cholera, would the Government endeavour more effectually to secure the introduction into the generality of Bengal prisons of those special sanitary improvements which had lately been eminently successful at the Hugli District Gaol and also at Bhagalpur, where deaths from dysentry and other malarial diseases had, in consequence, been reduced to a minimum.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. member has quoted figures which apply not to the last five years, but the fifty-one years from 1844 to 1894. The corresponding figures for the last five years would be 16,576, 622 and 51. The average death-rate per mille of average strength in those five years was only 37, a rate so low that it goes far to confirm the statement which I made last week, that the Lieutenant-Governor is doing all that lies in his power to make the gaols more healthy. I am not aware what are the special sanitary improvements to which the question refers; but I will, however, cause the question to be brought under the notice of the Lieutenant-Governor.

HEALTH OF EUROPEAN TROOPS.

Mr. CALDWELL asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to the prevalence of enteric fever amongst the European troops in India:

And whether he would cause enquiry to be made as to the disposal of the night soil and manure collected in the bazaars and districts of the various cantonments where such enteric fever exists, and in particular as to the size and extent of the manure yards, and how far the night soil and manure were buried, and the seasonal cultivation of the land neglected.

Lord George Hamilton: The subject of the prevalence of enteric fever among the British troops in India was considered by a Special Committee in India a few years ago, and the Government of India are fully alive to the importance of taking all sanitary precautions, including those referred to in the second paragraph of the question, to check this disease. The subject is one which is constantly engaging their attention.

THE ROYAL ENGINEERS.

Sir Bevan Edwards asked the Secretary of State for India whether it had been brought to his notice that the Indian Government had refused to employ several lieutenant-colonels of the Royal Engineers who had lately been sent to India by the War Office:

And could he state what steps he proposed to take to ensure that those officers should be employed.

Lord George Hamilton: Difficulties have arisen in finding suitable employment in India for the senior officers of the Royal Engineers whom the Indian Government, in accordance with their agreement with the War Office, retain upon the Indian establishments.

This question, which presses for settlement, is now under consideration.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dr. Tanner asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether there had been any falling-off of candidates for commissions in the Army Medical Department; if so, what was considered the cause; whether the same result occurred in connexion with candidates for the Indian Medical Service; and what were the numbers presenting themselves for examination in those services respectively for the past three years.

Dr. Kenny asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether, at last examination for candidates for the Army Medical Service, there were more vacancies than candidates; whether there were at present at the Irish medical schools any intending candidates for the Army Medical Service; and had he any information showing to what causes the falling-off in candidates was attributable, especially of candidates from the Irish schools, for a service hitherto so popular.

Mr. Brodrick: The question has been also brought to the notice of Lord Lansdowne by the learned member for Dublin University. In proportion to the vacancies offered for competition there was a falling-off in the number of candidates in 1895 as compared with 1893 and 1894. The same result occurred, though in a less degree, for the Indian Medical Service. The candidates during the last three years have been: for the Army Medical Staff, 59 for 26 vacancies, 51 for 22 vacancies, and 40 for 27 vacancies; for the Indian Medical Service, 63 for 27 vacancies, 69 for 28 vacancies, and 70 for 34 vacancies. At the last examination for the Army Medical Staff 18 candidates competed for 17 vacancies. The causes of this diminution, especially in the number of Irish candidates, are engaging the serious consideration of the Secretary of State, and I hope to be in a position to make a statement upon the subject in introducing the Army Estimates.

Dr. Kenny suggested that the falling-off of Irish candidates was due to the fact that there were no representatives of Irish medical schools on the examining board for either the Indian Medical Service or the Army Medical Service.

Dr. Tanner also asked for the cause of this "boycotting" of the services by young medical men from Ireland.

Mr. Brodrick said the matter should be investigated.

TELEGRAMS TO INDIA.

Sir John Leng asked the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether, in view of the restrictive effect of the present high tariff for telegraphic messages between the United Kingdom and India, he would favourably consider the proposal of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that the charge should be reduced from five francs to three francs per word, and endeavour to give effect to the recommendation at the forthcoming International Telegraph Conference.

Mr. R. W. Hanbury: The Postmaster-General cannot find that such a proposal has reached him from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and he thinks it is more likely to have been addressed to the Government of India, which is directly concerned in the matter. He has, however, received representations on behalf of the merchants and others in this country who use the telegraph to India and he is in communication with the cable companies on the subject.

February 28th.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

ARMY SERVICE IN INDIA.

Lord Monkswell rose to call attention to the practice of sending band-boys to India at the age of fifteen; and to move: "That a humble address be presented for a return of the number of persons enlisted in the army as boys who have been sent to India under the age of twenty during the last five years, giving the names, ages, and medical records of such of them as have died or been discharged invalided from the service, and the pensions granted to the latter." He said that the class on whose behalf he proposed to address a few words to their lordships was not a large or influential one, but he thought their case was worthy of attention. His attention was first called to the matter in the course of his duties as a Commissioner of Chelsea Hospital. The Commissioners met once a week to go through the list of soldiers discharged invalided from the army, with a view to deciding whether or not they were entitled to pensions. In going through these lists he observed cases of lads of seventeen or eighteen discharged invalided after service in India. He thought that a very shocking state of things, and at his request another Commissioner, a general officer, promised to look into the matter and report. He met his gallant friend on several subsequent occasions, and he always said he had the matter under consideration. The late Government went out in rather a hurry, and his gallant friend did not report to him, but as he implored him not to drop the matter, he had thought that he would have reported to the noble marquis opposite. Some months ago he had a conversation with the noble marquis on the subject. The noble marquis met him in a very sympathetic and friendly spirit, and said he was obliged to him for bringing the matter to his attention, and promised to enquire into it. He heard no more, and a few days ago he wrote to ask what had been done. The noble marquis very candidly replied that the matter had entirely escaped his memory, and went on to say that the War Office had determined to make no alteration. In office and out of office he had tried to press the matter forward, but had miserably failed. His only course, therefore, was to bring the matter before their lordship's House. It might be that the noble marquis would tell him that these boys when they arrived in India were sent to hill stations. He was aware that that was the theory, but he was assured on high military authority that the practice did not conform with the theory. The colonel of the regiment did not like to break up his band, and was under great temptations to encourage these boys to remain in the plains. He would sometimes go round and say: "You are quite well, my lad, are you not? It will not do you any harm to remain here;" and the boy being pleased by the notice taken of him by his commanding officer, made no objection, and in many cases he remained, and, in the words of a distinguished officer, "the poor boy blows and blows till he can blow no longer." He ventured to put forward a general proposition which he was sure would have the unanimous assent of their lordships and of the Secretary of State for War. It was this, that except in cases of necessity it was wrong for them to inflict on the children of other people dangers to health to which they would not on any account subject their own children. The noble marquis could make out no case of necessity for sending these boys to India, and he hoped the Secretary of State would at least promise him to look most carefully into this matter. He ventured even to express the hope that he would go a little further, and would be able to tell the House that he had come to the conclusion that some considerable alteration ought to be made as to the age at which boys were liable to be sent to India. He begged to move the motion which stood in his name.

The Marquis of Lansdowne: I must begin by pleading guilty to the act of forgetfulness the noble lord imputes to me. If I did lose sight of the wish he expressed, that wish was conveyed to me at a time when both of us were somewhat hurried and it is only natural that his words should not have fixed

themselves as firmly as they might have done on my attention. As regards the attitude of the War Office, I think the noble lord will not complain if, considering the enormous attempts he seems to have made to obtain a change of policy in regard to this question, during the short time I have been connected with the department, I should not have taken the question up. I find it to be the case that these band boys have for a very long time past been sent to India at the age of fifteen. The question seems to have been under consideration more than once, but those in authority have never been satisfied that there was any sufficient cause for making a change. On one occasion, indeed, a proposal was put forward to reduce the age limit and to send out those boys at the age of fourteen, but that proposal was not accepted. I should have said at first that there are about 600 of these boys altogether in India at the present time, who went out to India at fifteen years of age. It may be argued that as we avoid sending soldiers to India until they are past the age of twenty, *a fortiori* it is a very wrong thing to send lads of fifteen to that country. That is a view of the case which at first commended itself very strongly to me, but I am assured, on what I know to be good authority, that the facts do not entirely support these arguments. I am told by those who have a right to form an opinion, that growing lads of fifteen are less liable to take harm from the effects of the Indian climate, and particularly from those diseases which are prevalent in that country, than men five or six years older; and the only statistics which I have been able to obtain since the noble lord put his question on the paper, certainly bear out that view, because I find that taking the ten years, ending 1894, there were 9·55 deaths per thousand amongst men under twenty, whereas there were no less than 17·28 deaths per thousand among men between twenty and twenty-five, and taking invaliding, the rate per thousand for men under twenty was 10·55, and for men between twenty and twenty-five, 26·57. These figures certainly at first sight seem to bear out the view I have expressed just now, and I think it will be obvious to the noble lord, that there are certain reasons for which we might expect that these lads would probably suffer less from the climate than youths of a greater age; because these band boys are certainly very much less exposed to extreme fatigue and great heat than the regular soldiers. For instance, they escape altogether, I believe, duty as sentries—a very trying duty, as we all know, in hot climates. The noble lord has moved for a return showing the number of persons enlisted as boys, their names, ages, and medical records. I have no wish whatever to keep back anything from the noble lord, but I am told this return would take considerable time to prepare, that we should have to refer to every battalion, the records of each would have to be searched and the information would be very far from easy to obtain. I hope, therefore, the noble lord will not press his motion for their return, but will be content with the assurance I give him that I will have the matter very carefully looked into—particularly if he will assist me by communicating to me privately the authorities upon whom he relies for his statement—and let him know the result as soon as I have anything to communicate.

Lord Monkswell: I should like to ask the noble Marquis whether the statistics he has given include combatants?

The Marquis of Lansdowne: As no soldiers are allowed to go to India until they are past twenty, it is obvious that the greater number of men returned below twenty must be these band boys.

Lord Monkswell: Do the figures include those killed in action?

The Marquis of Lansdowne: Yes.

Lord Monkswell thought that the view taken by the noble marquis was a little startling, because they all knew that it was dangerous to their health to send young men under twenty to India. The noble marquis said that about 9½ per thousand of those under twenty died. That was a large percentage, but it was impossible to say, unless the noble marquis produced statistics a little more in detail, how it came to pass that the enormous number of 17½ per thousand died between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. There might be other reasons for that, which he would not go into now, besides the fact that some others were probably killed in action. The noble marquis knew that in England it was a very rare thing for a boy between fifteen and twenty to die. He understood that at Eton the deathrate was one in 2,000, and in industrial schools with which he was connected the death rate was certainly not more than 2 in 1,000. A death rate, therefore, of 9½ in the 1,000 was very high. The statistics of the noble marquis really proved too much, because if he was right the moment a young recruit was enlisted they ought to send him out to India.

The Earl of Wemyss hoped the Secretary of State for War would also give his attention to the question of the service of immature boys in the army. Was it right or desirable that they should have served in the army and be reckoned as efficient soldier-boys under twenty years of age? He did not think that youths of seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen, ought to be borne on the army estimates or reckoned as efficient soldiers.

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN MINTS.

Sir William Codrington asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he could give any information as to the tenour of the communications which had passed between Her Majesty's Government and that of Germany with reference to the re-opening of the Indian mints; and whether any change had taken place in the views of Her Majesty's Government since the date of those communications.

Mr. Curzon: On November 8th Count Hatzfeldt enquired whether Her Majesty's Government were willing to discuss the bi-metallic question in conference, in the event of the German Government deciding to do so. Lord Salisbury replied that he must consult his colleagues before expressing a definite opinion; but that he did not wish to exclude the idea of a conference if good grounds for holding it were shown. In a subsequent conversation, Count Hatzfeldt enquired whether the Indian Government proposed to re-open their mints, as the German Government considered this a necessary condition of any international arrangement. On December 6th he was informed that the re-opening of the Indian mints was not contemplated either by the Government of India or by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council. This being the case, the subject was not then pursued further. At a later date Count Hatzfeldt showed to Lord Salisbury the statement which the German Chancellor proposed to make in the Reichstag as to what had passed between them. Lord Salisbury made no objection to the statement, but with reference to observations made in the Reichstag he reminded Count Hatzfeldt that his reply had been confined to a statement of the facts as they then were, and had not been intended to imply any intention, one way or the other, for the future. The statement made by the First Lord on February 20th indicates the general views which Her Majesty's Government, after consideration, entertain upon the subject.

THE SIAM AGREEMENT.

Mr. C. E. Schwann asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when he would be able to lay upon the Table of the House the papers with reference to Siam, and the negotiations prior to the signing of the Anglo-French Convention, as well as a copy of the treaty itself.

Mr. Curzon: The Anglo-French Declaration about Siam will be laid next week, with a copy of the despatch to Lord Dufferin which has already appeared in the *Gazette*. As I have before stated, it is not proposed to lay papers relative to the previous negotiation.

March 2nd.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE OCCUPATION OF CHITRAL.

Lord Reay asked the Under Secretary for India whether any further papers would be presented to Parliament referring to the final settlement made with Chitral; to any arrangements entered into with the tribes through whose territories the road from Peshawar to Chitral was made; stating the expenditure on the road and the estimated annual expenditure on the

military posts entailed by the construction of this road; and the estimated annual expenditure on the occupation of Chitral.

The Earl of Onslow: Papers showing the final settlement with Chitral and the tribal agreements are in the press for presentation to Parliament. The additional annual military expenditure upon the occupation of Chitral and upon the line of communication will be shown in one of the despatches included in the return. (Hear, hear.)

THE INDIAN COTTON DUTIES.

Lord Reay asked the Under Secretary for India whether the correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Government of India relating to the alteration in the import and excise duties on cotton, the memorials addressed to the Government of India by the Indian Chambers of Commerce and the Indian Millowners' Associations, would be included in the papers which were to be laid on the Table by the Secretary of State.

The Earl of Onslow: The correspondence with the Government of India and the memorials, so far as they have reached the Secretary of State for India, will be included in the Cotton Duties Papers to be laid on the Table. (Hear, hear.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India (Opium). Copy presented of Correspondence regarding the Report by the Royal Commission on Opium [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

INDIAN FORCES BEYOND THE FRONTIERS.

Mr. Buchanan asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the 24th Bombay Native Infantry, or other force had been ordered to proceed to British East Africa to engage in military operations:

And, whether, as this was an employment of the Indian forces in military operations beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions, he intended at an early date, to submit a motion to the House in accordance with the 55th section of the Government of India Act.

Lord George Hamilton: My answer to the first question is in the affirmative.

As regards the section of the Act referred to in the second question, I am advised that its restriction is purely financial, viz., that the revenues of India shall not, without the assent of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operations carried on beyond the frontiers of India by Her Majesty's forces charged upon Indian revenues.

I am in communication with the Foreign Office and Treasury as to how the expenditure in connexion with this regiment is to be met, and, until this question is settled, I cannot say if it will be necessary under the section to submit any motion to the House.

Sir C. Dilke: Can the noble lord say to whom this regiment is lent, and if to the Zanzibar Government, can he say whether he has made any stipulation on behalf of India with regard to the command of the force of which it forms part, in fact, under whose direction it is to be?

Lord G. Hamilton: It will be under the command of its colonel, who will precede the officers at present in charge.

Mr. Buchanan: If the Secretary of State determines that any part of the expense shall be borne by India, will a resolution be submitted to the House?

Lord G. Hamilton: I will take care that the section is not infringed.

THE OPIUM COMMISSION.

Mr. Henry J. Wilson asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would lay upon the Table any correspondence with the Government of India in reference to opium, arising out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Opium.

Lord George Hamilton: The correspondence to which the hon. member alludes will be laid upon the Table to-day.

MORTALITY IN BENGAL PRISONS.

Mr. Henry J. Wilson asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would lay upon the Table the report as to the excessive death-rate in Bengal prisons, and the other papers connected with the enquiry some two years ago:

And why the Administrative Report of the Gaols of Bengal, printed at the Bengal Secretariat Press, was marked as not printed for sale, and was not purchaseable as similar reports were in this country.

Lord George Hamilton: I am not aware that there has been any single report on the subject referred to. The Government of India's Proceedings contain several voluminous reports upon certain gaols, in which a heavy mortality had been observed; but the papers are obviously incomplete. I will make enquiries, and let the hon. member know in due course what papers can be presented upon his making the usual motion.

I will also enquire whether the Administration Report may not be offered for sale after it has been reviewed by the Lieutenant-Governor. The Government resolution, I observe, has been published in the official *Gazette*, and it seems to contain all the material facts.

POPPY CULTIVATION.

Mr. Henry J. Wilson asked the Secretary of State for India if he could state what was the quantity of land under poppy cultivation this year in the Behar and Benares Agencies, respectively, as compared with the years 1893-4 and 1894-5.

Lord George Hamilton: Information regarding the area under poppy cultivation during the present season, the spring of 1896, has not yet reached me.

POST CARDS.

Mr. Henniker Heaton asked the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General,

1. Whether he was aware that the Government of India sells post cards at their face value.
2. Whether those post cards were printed in England by the same firm that prints British post cards.
3. What would be the estimated loss to the Government by selling thin halfpenny post cards at their face value, in place of selling them at three farthings each; and,
4. Whether the Government take into consideration the claims of the stationers when selling penny post cards at their face value?

Mr. Hanbury: It is understood that the Government of India sells post cards at their face value. The answer to the second paragraph is in the affirmative. At the present rate of issue the loss would be £6,500 a year. As regards the last paragraph, the sale of these cards is not so large as to materially affect the interests of stationers.

March 3rd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SIAM.

Mr. E. R. P. Moon asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, at any point or points south of the Nam-Huok River, the western frontier (including the 25 kil. zone) of French Indo-China, was, by the Convention of 15th January, made conterminous with the eastern frontier of the neutralised portion of Siam; and, if so, when and how it was proposed to delimit accurately the region indicated vaguely in Article 1 of the said Convention as comprised: (*a*) in the basins of certain rivers; (*b*) a strip of coast with the river basins thereof; and (*c*) a further vaguely-indicated territory in the north-east of Siam.

Mr. Curzon: The 25 kil. zone is not, as the question implies, included within the western frontier of French Indo-China. It lies outside of the latter, and remains Siamese territory, subject to certain stipulations under the Franco-Siamese Treaty of October, 1893. A map of the Siamese dominions, indicating that part of them which has been guaranteed by the recent agreement between England and France, will be laid with the papers this week. It has not so far been thought necessary to proceed with more exact delimitation.

THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for Indi whether in view of the distinguished services of the India

Staff Corps, and the fact that the Artillery, Engineers, and Marines, as well as the Indian Naval Squadron were styled "Royal," the Government would consider the propriety of praying Her Majesty the Queen to graciously order that the designation of "Royal" or "Imperial" should be prefixed to the title of the "Indian Staff Corps."

Lord George Hamilton: I am not aware that there is any general desire on the part of the officers of the Indian Staff Corps for a change of designation of their service.

I should be reluctant to move in the matter until I have a recommendation on the subject from the Government of India.

THE IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to observations made in a paper read by Sir J. B. Lyall, lately Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, at the Society of Arts on 13th February, on the high scientific and economic value of the work performed by the officers of the Indian Irrigation Department, its responsible and risky nature, and the exceptional hardships involved in living in insalubrious out stations where bread and decent food were not procurable, the unpopularity of the service, and the discontent among the executive and assistant-engineers in it:

Whether, when Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, with Colonel Ottley as Chief Engineer, Sir J. B. Lyall proposed to the Government of India that, as partial compensation to these officers for the exceptional conditions above summarised, superior pay, in the form of out-station allowances, should be granted to these engineers;

Whether the proposal was approved by the Indian Government:

And, whether any information of the proposal, and the grounds of disapproval, had been received at the India Office; and, if not whether he would call for a report on the subject from the Viceregal Government.

Lord George Hamilton: The statements in Sir J. B. Lyall's interesting paper referred to by the honourable member have been brought to my notice. It is the case that a recommendation was made by Sir J. B. Lyall, when Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, to the Government of India for the grant of "jungle or out-station allowances" to certain engineers of the Irrigation Department. This recommendation was not, however, accepted by the Government of India, on the ground that the circumstances of the officers in question did not differ widely, if at all, from those of officers of the Public Works and other Departments in other parts of India who were stationed in outlying or solitary districts.

I see no reason for interfering with the discretion of the Government of India in this matter.

MILITARY AND PUBLIC WORKS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would consent to grant as unopposed Returns the papers mentioned in that day's Notices of Motions standing under the heads of "East India (Pensions)" and "East India (Establishment Charges and Percentages in the Military Works and Public Works Departments)".

Lord George Hamilton: As regards the report of the Committee on the Military Works and Public Works Departments, no expression of opinion on it has been received from the Government of India, nor has it been considered by the Secretary of State in Council. Until this has been done, I cannot undertake to say whether it can be laid on the Table.

KAFIRISTAN.

Mr. Thomas Bayley asked the Secretary of State for India whether information had been received by Her Majesty's Government as to the disposal of the people in the portion of Kafiristan taken possession of by the Afghans prior to the cessation of hostilities on 24th January last, and the removal to Chitral of those who wished to leave the conquered country:

Whether Her Majesty's Government would make arrangements with the Amir of Afghanistan for the safe conduct of these and any other expatriated Kafirs into districts where they could be suitably provided for, and would see that such provision was made:

Whether, as there does not appear to be accommodation in Chitral for any large number of Kafir settlers, Her Majesty's Government would consider the expediency of locating the exiles in Kashmir or some other district less crowded and affording better facilities for peaceable residence than Chitral:

And whether, if the complete occupation of Kafiristan by the Afghans was inevitable, Her Majesty's Government would use its influence to secure the adoption of a policy not less humane than that which, as reported in the *Times* of 21st February, had been insisted upon by the Russian Government as regards the evacuation of the Darwaz district of Bokhara, lately ceded to Afghanistan.

Lord George Hamilton: No information of a trustworthy character has been received as to the treatment or disposal of the Kafir prisoners; as regards those who remain in Kafiristan I have received from no reliable source any information contradicting the statement I made on the 20th February.

The conditions connected with the transfer of the Darwaz district of Bokhara are so widely different from those surrounding Kafiristan that I should doubt the expediency of pressing on His Highness the Amir the special arrangements suggested by the hon. member; but any favourable opportunity of exercising beneficial influence on behalf of the Kafirs will be made use of by the Government of India, and I will communicate with the Viceroy as to the possibility of providing for the peaceable settlement in suitable districts of such Kafirs as may have taken refuge in British protectorate.

Sir W. Wedderburn asked whether influence might not be used to prevent the expatriation of these Kafirs altogether?

Lord George Hamilton: I cannot go beyond the answer I have given.

March 5th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India (Statement of Trade). Copy presented of Statement of the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1890-91 to 1894-5 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY PENSION.

Mr. Patrick O'Brien asked the Secretary of State for War whether his attention had been drawn to the case of Patrick Lynch, late of the 108th regiment, who gave eighteen years' service, fifteen of it in India, and was engaged in battle at Bandah and several other engagements, was awarded four good-conduct badges and the Indian medal and clasp, and discharged in 1872 on account of disease, the result of long service in India, on a pension of ninepence per day; whether he was aware that Lynch, being unable to work or support himself on his pension, was obliged to go into the Kilkenny workhouse, where he was at present; and whether, in consideration of his good character and distinguished service, he would increase Lynch's pension to enable him to support himself outside the workhouse?

Mr. J. Powell-Williams: This case will be referred for enquiry by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital.

MADRAS PROPRIETARY VILLAGE SERVICE ACT.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Select Committee of the Madras Legislative Council, in reporting on the Bill, which afterwards became Act II. of 1894 (Madras Proprietary Village Service Act), stated that they had no information regarding the duties of village servants, other than the village accountant; whether the Act had been brought into force, and, if not, would he explain for what reason; and whether, according to Mr. J. D. Rees, Head Assistant Collector at Tinnevelly, and other authorities, interference with the ancient village police system had led to an increase of crime.

Lord George Hamilton: The Select Committee gave their want of information as a reason for leaving to the Board of Revenue the definition of the duties of the various classes of village officers, instead of attempting to define them in the Act. I am not aware that the Act has been brought into operation. The delay is presumably due to the necessity for thoroughly investigating the conditions of each locality before bringing it under the Act. Under the "ancient village

system" in force in the particular locality of which Mr. Rees was writing, the villagers were in the habit of engaging as policemen professional robbers, who divided their remuneration with their caste-fellows. It was probably the suppression of this blackmailing which in Mr. Rees opinion led to an increase of crime in 1878, but a more obvious cause is the famine of the previous year.

THE MAHARAJA OF JHALAWAR.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was now able to lay upon the Table any papers or correspondence relating to the disputes between the Government of India and the Máhárája of Jhalawar; whether he was able to state whether the telegram from Calcutta, published in yesterday's *Daily Chronicle*, announcing the deposition of the Prince, was correct; whether, in accordance with the pledge of the Government given on the 25th ultimo, the Máhárája would have every opportunity of submitting his reply to the charges made against him; and whether those charges would be made the subject of a public enquiry, in which the Máhárája would have the advantage of legal advice.

Mr. E. H. Pickersgill asked the Secretary of State for India whether it was true, as reported, that the Máhárája of Jhalawar had been deposed.

Lord George Hamilton: I must invite the attention of the hon. member to my reply on the 24th of February. Until I have received by mail the final orders and papers from the Indian Government relating to the case, I cannot say what papers I can produce. I am informed by telegram that the enquiry has resulted in the deposition of the Máháraja Rana, and that this decision has been made known in Jhalawar. The charges brought against His Highness have been fully explained to him, and his written answers received. There has been no restriction upon his seeking advice, and the enquiry has been conducted according to the usual practice, which I am not disposed to modify.

THE MAHARAJA OF PATNA.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State of India if he would instruct the Government of India to order a public inquiry into all the circumstances relating to the suicide of the Máháraja and of the Máhárani of Patna?

Lord George Hamilton: The unfortunate circumstance referred to is one of which I possess no further details than are supplied by the Press and the answer given in the Viceroy's Council on the 6th February. Mr. Woodburn then replied that the Government of the Central Provinces had instituted full enquiries, the result of which was to show that the Máháraja shot his wife and himself, being undoubtedly insane at the time. The Government of India did not think any further enquiry necessary, and I have no reason to differ from that view.

Dr. Clark: Is the right hon. gentleman aware of the fact the Máháraja, before shooting his wife and committing suicide, wrote stating that he was driven to this course in consequence of the persecution of the Foreign Office?

Lord George Hamilton: No, Sir; the immediate cause of the suicide was insanity.

THE MOPLAH FANATICS.

Dr. Tanner asked the Secretary of State for India if he would explain the circumstances under which the South Staffordshire regiment attacked and killed 100 Moplahs near Madras; and whether there was any resistance offered by the Moplahs?

Lord George Hamilton: I have learned by telegram from the Government of Madras that a collision has taken place between the troops and a body of Moplah fanatics, who had committed five murders, and had then taken possession of a Hindu Temple at Manjeri. In the fighting which ensued, 88 of the latter were killed and five wounded, but the Government when they telegraphed were not aware of the immediate cause of the outbreak, nor do they mention the circumstances under which the conflict took place. Further information is expected shortly, and when I receive it I shall be ready to communicate it to the House.

Mr. J. W. Logan asked how many of the British troops were killed or wounded in the affray?

Lord George Hamilton: The telegram does not state.

THE CANTONMENT OF MHOW.

Mr. J. Caldwell asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government was aware that the Cantonment of Mhow, with a population of 32,000, had been only using twelve acres of land for the manure yard or pit for the burying of the night soil and refuse since the first establishment of the station, without any seasonal cultivation of crops; how long this state of matters was to be allowed to be continued; what was the amount at the credit of the Cantonment Fund of Mhow at the date of the last return in his possession; how the funds were invested; and whether the Indian Government would take steps for having such balances or part thereof applied to the improvement of the sanitary condition of the bazaars in the Cantonment.

Lord George Hamilton: I have no official information of the circumstances detailed by the hon. member as to the Cantonment of Mhow, but I will call the attention of the Government of India to the subject.

THE PATNA AND JHALAWAR CASES.

On the motion for the adjournment of the House,

Dr. Clark complained that the Secretary for India had given insufficient information in regard to the deposition by the Indian Government, without due enquiry, of the Máháraja of Jhalawar and the suicide of the Máháraja of Patna, about whom questions had been asked at question time. It was a very serious matter for the people of India if native rulers were to be secretly deposed by a mere Departmental Committee without getting a fair trial, and without any information being given to the House of Commons in the matter.

Lord George Hamilton said it was quite true that the Máháraja of Jhalawar had been deposed, but circumstances warranted that action on the part of the Government of India. The Máháraja was first deposed in 1884 by Lord Ripon, when Viceroy of India, and was subsequently partially reinstated; but circumstances had since arisen which compelled the Government of India, in the interest of the people over whom he ruled, to again depose the Máháraja. When papers containing full particulars of the occurrence arrived from India it would be found that the action of the Indian Government was fully justified. Then, in regard to the suicide of the Máháraja of Patna, the hon. member had said at question time that the Máháraja had been driven to this act by the persecution of the Indian Government. There was no doubt the Máháraja was insane, and he might have got into his head that he had a grievance against the Government of India. He thought the House should not be made a platform on which to discuss matters of this kind. He certainly, as long as he had anything to do with the Government of India, would not interfere. The Government had a duty to perform towards the people of India, and if they found that anyone was abusing his power they could not allow it. He thought that when the papers were laid on the Table the hon. gentleman would see that there was no alternative to the course taken by the Government.

Dr. Tanner: How soon may we expect these papers?

Lord George Hamilton: I cannot say.

Dr. Tanner: About what date approximately? (Order, order.)

March 6th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

Mr. P. M. Thornton asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any officers of the Royal Indian Marines were offered commissions as supernumerary lieutenants in the British Navy, when 100 candidates were recently selected for these posts from the Royal Naval Reserve and other sources.

Mr. G. J. Goschen: One officer of the Royal Indian Marines has been offered a commission on the supplementary list of the Royal Navy, provided that he passes the Board of

Trade examination. I do not know that any other application has been received.

March 9th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

AGRICULTURAL BANKS IN MADRAS.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India if he would issue to members as a Parliamentary Paper the recently published Report regarding the possibility of introducing land and agricultural banks into the Madras Presidency.

Lord George Hamilton: The Report on agricultural banks in India is not complete. Volume I. only has come home, and the Report has not yet been considered by the Government in India or by the Secretary of State in Council:

It would, therefore, be premature to lay a part of the Report on the Table; but a copy of Volume I. has been placed in the library of the House, and ten more copies of that volume could be made available for hon. members interested in the subject.

I shall be happy to supply a copy to the hon. member.

CHOLERA AT LUCKNOW.

Dr. Tanner asked the Under Secretary of State for War, whether any attention had been paid to the report on the outbreak of cholera at Lucknow:

What was the present condition of the filter beds attached to the wells:

Whether it had been substantiated that these wells were contaminated with the cholera microbe:

And, what were the reasons given for the high mortality, 97 in 144.

Lord George Hamilton: The report on the outbreak of cholera at Lucknow in 1894 has no doubt been fully considered by the military authorities in India, but I have not received a copy of the report.

The cantonment is now supplied with pure water by the Lucknow municipality.

The opinion of the committee was that the sand in the filter bed attached to the wells was contaminated with the microbe of cholera.

No special reasons were assigned for the high mortality, which, however, was not higher than the average.

March 10th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

HOSTILITIES NEAR MOMBASA.

Sir Charles Dilke asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what Indian troops had been engaged in military operations in the neighbourhood of Mombasa, under the command of Captain Barratt, 1st Sikhs, and Lieutenant Scott, 3rd Sikhs; who had directed in chief the military operations on the east coast of Africa; whether, in the course of the present year, fighting had been going on in the suburbs of Mombasa itself; and whether the fighting in the immediate neighbourhood of Mombasa and the recent hostility of the Masai tribe had delayed the construction of the Uganda Railway.

Mr. George Curzon: The Indian troops in question are Punjaubi Mussulman or Pathan Volunteers from Indian regiments, 300 in number, who belong to the regular police force of the Protectorate. Major Hatch is the officer in chief command. The missionary station at Frere Town was attacked on January 21st by marauders, who were repulsed by the native guard without loss to the latter. The construction of the railway has not been interfered with.

SUNDAY OPENING OF MUSEUMS.

Sir S. Montagu, in the course of his speech upon Mr. Massey-Mainwaring's motion in favour of the Sunday opening of museums, said: The only difficulty, if any, lay in the employment of extra people in museums and galleries on Sundays. He said extra people, because policemen and other guardians were now very rightly employed on Sundays to protect our art treasures, although the public were excluded on that day. He believed very few extra men would be required in London on Sundays, and they could be chosen from those who had another day of rest. Supporters of the movement cited provincial towns where museums were opened on Sundays, but Government were not directly responsible for that fact; but Her Majesty's Government were directly responsible for what was done in our Indian possessions, and he found that in Calcutta the Great Indian Museum was open free to the public on Sundays. Of course it might be said that those employed there were not Christians. But that course could be adopted in this country if necessary. British subjects, either Muhammadans or Jews, could be had as volunteer guardians on Sundays, or at the cost of a few shillings each.

March 12th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE BEHAR OPIUM AGENCY.

Mr. Arthur Pease asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the Government had any information as to the progress made by the Government of India in arranging that the Behar Opium Agency should as the Benares Agency already does, deal direct with the cultivators of opium instead of dealing through middlemen.

Lord George Hamilton: The latest report from the Board of Revenue dated February, 1896, shows that the plan of dealing direct with opium rayats is being tried this season, at the time of making payments, in selected subdivisions of the Behar Opium Agency.

As soon as experience has been gained of the new system, both by rayats and opium revenue officials, it can be introduced gradually into the whole agency.

SURGEON-MAJOR SMITH.

Sir Henry Fowler asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to the statement in the *Standard* of the 10th March, as to the case of Surgeon Major Clarence Smith:

Whether the allegations contained in that statement with respect to the gravity of the offence charged against Surgeon Major Smith, the action of the Government of Madras and of the late Secretary of State were correct;

And, whether he would lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Commission appointed by the late Secretary of State to investigate this case.

Lord George Hamilton: The offence for which Surgeon Major Smith was required to retire from the Service was more serious than would be gathered from the article alluded to, and there was on that point no difference of opinion whatever between the right honourable gentleman and myself.

A Commission had been appointed before I took office to enquire into the accuracy of the allegations made and their report was only received a short time back. The delay that thus occurred in settling the case resulted in a postponement of the date of the retirement of the officer in question, which secured him, according to the existing regulations certain advantages in respect of pension.

It would be contrary to the practice both of the War Office and of the India Office to make public any papers affecting the conduct of an officer upon whom the Secretary of State has passed orders, and I am not prepared to depart from that practice in this case.

March 13th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE "CAT" IN THE INDIAN ARMY.

Sir Charles Dilke asked the Secretary of State for India whether flogging by the British cat-o'-nine-tails still continued in the native army in India.

Lord George Hamilton: The instances of flogging in the native army are of rare exception, and average about one in 2,000 annually, but I understand the hon. gentleman has correctly described the instrument which is used on those very exceptional occasions.

THE DEFENCE OF THE EMPIRE.

Sir H. HAVELOCK-ALLAN, seconding Sir J. Colomb's motion with reference to the Army Estimates, said: Circumstances had again arisen on the south-eastern frontier of India, where the gradual advance of another friendly power had placed our frontiers co-terminous with the frontiers of France, Siam, and China. He said without hesitation that all those circumstances taken together constituted the strongest justification for the motion of his hon. friend, and of the endeavour he had made to see the people of this country taken into the confidence of the authorities on a question which excited little attention, but if it did excite the attention it deserved would place our army on the same footing in popular favour as our navy was at present. If these questions were to assume an acute form, and to resolve themselves into a demonstration on the northern frontier of India, what would our position be? Out of the available force we had in this country there would be required at less than a month's notice a reinforcement of our Indian force of 50,000 men. Lord Roberts and others were of opinion that the available force in India for operations on the north-west frontier would not exceed 60,000 men in two army corps at Peshawar and Quetta. If, therefore, any demonstration should be made against our Indian frontier, we should be obliged immediately to send at least 50,000 men to reinforce our garrisons in India. As to the south-eastern frontier—Burma, Siam, and the provinces of the Chinese Empire—it might happen that it would be necessary to reinforce our armies in Burma, the Straits Settlements, and China by at least 10,000 men. We might also hear of certain contingencies calling for the reinforcement of our forces in Egypt to the extent of 10,000 men. Out of the disposable force we might at any time be called upon at a month's notice to send 50,000 to India, 10,000 to Egypt, 10,000 to coaling stations, and communications in the Straits of Malacca and the Eastern Seas. What, then, became of the one army corps which they were told successive Secretaries for War had carefully prepared and elaborated. That army corps would be absorbed three times over. Those who had closely examined the military aspect of our needs said, that in order to put this country in a position to support its military interests abroad, three army corps, or 90,000 men, ought to be available for foreign service contingencies. Two of the army corps should be complete, and the third should be available for completion, say in two months. What they asked for, therefore, was not an increase of expenditure, but a better adaptation of means to an end through better organisation.

March 16th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN COTTON DUTIES.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India whether Sir J. Westland, the Finance Minister of India, had accepted as correct the estimate of the Bombay Millowners' Association that the recent modification of the Cotton Duties involved an increase of the excise levied in India from seven to eighteen lakhs of rupees.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Sir James Westland is reported to have said, in the debate of the 3rd of February, that he accepted these figures for present purposes, but that they in no way affected the principle of the Bill under discussion, viz., that of absolute equality of treatment. The report of this debate, together with other papers on the same subject, will shortly be ready for distribution.

THE HEMP DRUG COMMISSION.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to a Bill to amend the Excise Act, 1881, which had been introduced into the Legislative Council of India by Sir James Westland, purporting to give legislative effect to the recommendations of the Indian Hemp Drug Commission, appointed in consequence of a motion of this House:

Whether he was aware that this Bill proposed to grant the power to license hemp drugs in Burma, where it had hitherto been prohibited; that Sir James Westland, in his speech introducing the Bill, stated that the Government did not propose, even if these powers were enacted, to make any alteration in the system of administration of hemp drugs in that province; that the Commissioners unanimously reported that there ought to be a five tola maximum limit of possession of the drug all over India; and that this provision was not included in the Bill:

And whether he would examine this Bill in connexion with the Report and recommendations of the Commission.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The amending Bill to which the hon. member refers was introduced to give effect to the restrictive suggestions of the Hemp Drugs Commission, and that object will be kept in view.

As regards Burma, the existing law gives powers as to granting licences for the growth, preparation, and possession of ganja, which are not now exercised. The amending Bill introduces no change in this respect, and it is not proposed to make any use at present of these powers.

As regards the rest of India, I am advised that this Bill does not alter the existing law, under which five tolas is fixed as the limit for the retail sale of ganja; and it renews the provision that no unlicensed person may have in his possession more than that quantity of the drug.

ARMY PENSIONS.

Mr. D. MACALEESE asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he had received an application from Patrick Bryan, of Smithborough, county Monaghan, for a small increase of pension; and, considering that Bryan served in the 46th Regiment in the Crimea and gained a medal and clasp, and also served in India during the Mutiny, altogether for eighteen years on foreign service, and that he was now over sixty years of age, and unable, owing to a recent serious accident, to perform any labour to assist him in supporting himself and his wife, whether the War Office authorities could see their way to accede to his request for an increase of pension.

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Patrick Bryan was awarded the pension authorised by the regulation for his service at the time of his discharge from the army, and there is no regulation which enables pensions to be revised on grounds unconnected with military service.

SUPPLY.—ARMY ESTIMATES.

Sir C. DILKE, in the course of his speech upon the vote for army pay and allowances, said: When the present Government came into office there was a wide and searching discussion of the whole principles of army administration, and two large questions were raised to which the Government turned their immediate attention—namely, War Office administration and Cabinet responsibility in connexion with national defence. From the statement of the Under Secretary for War it appeared that War Office administration had been developed on the lines of the scheme laid before the House last August. But he himself was far from satisfied with it in the form it had assumed, and they did not see in the Army or Navy Estimates any evidence that up to the present time the matter had been thoroughly considered. It was true that we had a new Commander-in-Chief, that the Government had not been in office long, and that the Cabinet Committee on Defence had not long been constituted, and that it would be a mistake to change too suddenly the principles on which the defence of the country had been conducted in the past. But next year they would expect to see in the Army and Navy Estimates more evidence that the matter had been thoroughly considered. The expenditure of the country on land forces, taking England and India into account—for the problems of the British army could not be effectively considered unless the Indian army was taken into account—had been £36,250,000, and the Under Secretary said this was larger than the expenditure of any other power. But for the £36,250,000—and the sum would be larger next year—we did not attain such results as, in the absence of conscription, we should look for here and in India. Here we seemed to fall between two stools. We had confessedly no army in this country at present that could hope successfully to resist invasion by armies organised on a Continental scale. We spent a good deal of money on our land forces without obtaining for the money we spent an army which would enable us to resist invasion supposing our fleet failed. We failed not in the numbers of men but in the organisation of those men. We failed in tactics, in artillery, and the practice of our generals in command. . . . . Last year he said that what had been done in Belgium might be an example to us. In Belgium there were eight cavalry regiments in eight stations, chiefly manufacturing towns, and the regiments had been concentrated

in two stations at two towns. He earnestly hoped that the Government might be working in this direction, and that the small detachments in manufacturing towns might be grouped together in places where they could get real cavalry training, as they did in India.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman said that in making a comparison between this country and Germany, the right hon. gentleman, the member for the Forest of Dean did not keep in view two important facts—one, that in Germany conscription took men away from the ordinary work of the country at the very best time of their life and when they were most useful to society. (Hear, hear.) If he were to assess that consideration in money it would be difficult to say what the effect would be in comparison as to cost. The other fact was that the same principle which applied to conscription, placed the whole civil community in Germany practically at the disposal of the army. In Germany the country was adapted to the needs of the army, whereas in England, the army was adapted to the needs of the country. (Hear, hear.) The same consideration should be taken into account in regard to the manœuvres on a large scale. In this country we had to pass a Bill and set up a Committee to assess damages and consider rights and prejudices of the general community, whereas in Germany, the troops could march straight across country without any obstacle or difficulty. If they took into consideration the additional cost imposed on this country for its defence, and the fact that we had to garrison India and the colonies, that also made a material difference compared with Germany, which was exempt from such demands. All those facts showed that it was impossible to have an accurate comparison; but, as he had frequently said, our estimates had, at any rate, this advantage—that they brought under the notice of the House and the country, almost the whole of the cost of our military system, and he was not aware that any foreign estimates even professed to do anything of the sort.

Mr. H. O. Arnold-Forster said that he had asked a question with reference to the howitzers manufactured for the Indian and Home Governments. He had pointed out that we are making a 5·4 inch howitzer for India at Bombay, and a 5 inch howitzer at Woolwich for the use of the Home and Colonial army, but the answer he had received did not seem to him to be a very serious one. It was said that the howitzer in India was intended to break down walls, while the howitzer in Europe was intended for a different purpose. It was pointed out that they would be harnessed with bullocks in India and with horses in Europe. That was hardly an answer to the question. The fact was that the howitzer had not been really designed as part of a plan, but had been produced as the result of a pure blunder. Sixteen guns had been made for India, and no more would be made. Those guns would be dragged by horses in India, but as the howitzers were in India and as ammunition would have to follow them everywhere confusion would result until the guns were withdrawn. Taken with other facts this was very important. We had got into such a wilderness with regard to the types of guns that he did not know how we should be able to extricate ourselves from the difficulty. . . . . The Ordnance Committee had misled them over and over again. It misled them absolutely with regard to the navy, and they saw now the confusion it had left them in in regard to their land guns. Here was the last instance, and he would respectfully suggest to the Under Secretary that he might possibly recommend that this error might be cancelled, and that instead of sending these four batteries of 5·4 inch howitzers cruising about in India—there was not another gun in the whole of the British empire, on sea or on land, which would take that projectile—he might regard it as a bad debt, stop the making of the pattern at Woolwich, and take the first step in the direction of uniformity of ammunition and type of gun.

March 17th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

Kammalahs of Southern India.—Petition from Madras, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

DELAY OF PENSIONS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to the great delay which repeatedly occurred in the admission of officers in the Indian Civil Service, formerly classed as uncovenanted, to their pensions at the end of their leave at home, and the consequent hardship on men who had retired, owing to the inability of the India Office to pay them their pensions until notified of the amount from India:

And whether, if the Indian Government could not be induced to adopt measures to fix and report the amount of pension previously to notified retirements, or coincidently with retirement, it could be arranged that such retired officers who had arrived in this country might draw a certain proportion of their pensions based on the record of the length and character of their services, or whether he would consider what steps could be taken to remedy the inconvenience.

Lord George Hamilton: I am sorry to say that delay does occasionally occur, but in most cases it is owing to the fact that the officer in question has applied for a special pension, which it is not in the power of the audit officers to pass without special authority.

Rules have been laid down in India for the express purpose of accelerating, as far as possible, the payment of pensions, especially in cases where there is some doubt as to the proper amount of the pension; and the India Office, in such cases, pays promptly a provisional sum, subject to adjustment afterwards.

OFFICERS ON THE GENERAL LIST.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he could state how many men of the surviving officers of the general list, Indian army, signed the declaration that their appointments were to be "subject to any alterations that might be subsequently ordered in the conditions of service:"

And, whether he would state the precise date on which the declaration was first actually signed by a cadet on appointment.

Lord George Hamilton: Of the officers now on the general list, eleven filled up the old form of nomination which did not contain the question referred to by my honourable friend; there were in India at the time of their appointment, and it is not known what form they signed; the remaining fifty-five signed the new form.

The 17th December, 1858, is the date on which the new form was first signed by a cadet.

INDIAN RAILWAYS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was pledged to give the concession for the Grand Chord Line, viz., from Mogulserai to Barakar, to the East India Railway Company:

Whether he had granted to the East India Railway Company a concession to build from Mogulserai to Chergotty:

Whether he was aware of the strong feeling, repeatedly expressed through the Chamber of Commerce and otherwise, entertained by the mercantile community of Calcutta against granting the East India Railway Company a perpetual monopoly of the traffic between that port and Oudh, the North-West Provinces, and the Punjab:

And, whether he would, in deference to that feeling, arrange with the Bengal and Nagpur Railway Company, or some other line, to give an alternative route from Mogulserai into Calcutta.

Lord George Hamilton: It has been determined that the Chord Line between Mogulserai and Barakar shall, when constructed, be part of the East India Railway system, and the construction of a line from Mogulserai by Chergotty to Gya, forming the first instalment of the Chord Line, has accordingly been entrusted to the East India Railway Company. The opinions of the mercantile communities in India have been communicated from time to time to the Government of India, and to the Secretary of State, and have been duly considered, together with the other circumstances of the case; but there is no present intention of constructing any line between Mogulserai and Calcutta other than that which I have mentioned.

BIMETALLISM.

Reference was made to India by various speakers in the debate on Mr. H. Whitley's motion as follows: "That this House is of opinion that the instability of the relative value of

gold and silver since the action of the Latin Union in 1873 has proved injurious to the best interests of this country, and urges upon the Government the advisability of doing all in their power to secure by international agreement a stable monetary par of exchange between gold and silver."

Sir W. H. Houldsworth, in the course of his speech, said: The other great danger—and he believed it to be the greater of the two—was the competition of silver using countries with gold using countries. The yellow man with the white money was against the white man with the yellow money. The East—Japan especially, and China to some extent—were advancing by leaps and bounds, under the artificial stimulus of depreciated silver, in the making of all kinds of articles, and thus coming into competition with us in neutral markets, certainly in silver-using lands, and even in our own country. That was the great danger we would have to face if there was not established a stable monetary par of exchange between gold and silver, the competition of silver-using countries which would force our industries into a state of depression from which it would be very difficult to raise them. He would venture to give the House one concrete case of this severe competition. This was an extract from a report by a gentleman who had had great experience in the East: "I have here before me, for instance, a Japan-made shirt. It is of good quality, hand-made. That shirt cost two dollars. In the days of the four-shilling dollar, therefore, to go no farther back, it would have cost eight shillings, could not have competed with an English-made one, and would have no existence. It still costs two dollars; but the fall of the dollar to two shillings reduces its equivalent cost in English money to four shillings, and it cannot be made in England at that price." The *Times*, which was not very favourable to bimetallism, which was rather disposed to think that bimetallists were complaining very much of a condition of things that was not justified by facts, published on October 28th, 1895, a special article on "Indian Affairs," which said: "As European statesmen are now compelled to recognise in Japan a predominant factor in Eastern politics, so British capitalists and Indian millowners are being forced to acknowledge her successes in the great commercial struggle of the nations. . . . India enters on the struggle with her mints closed and with the mints of Japan open. The avowed object of the closing of the Indian mints is to create an artificial scarcity of coin in India and to give to the rupee an artificial value. We have from the first pointed out the economic dangers incident to experiment. In proportion as the artificial appreciation the rupee affords permanent relief to Indian official finance regard to gold obligations, it lays a permanent burden upon Indian production in the competition with silver-using countries." The writer went on to say: "One does not require to believe in bimetallism in order to recognise the enormous advantages which the manufacturers in a silver country enjoy in competing with gold countries." That was the great danger that lay before us if a monetary par of exchange between gold and silver was not established.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, in the course of his speech said: May not there be a reason for this fall in prices which has absolutely nothing whatever to do with any question of the appreciation of gold? Surely the fall has been, as Mr. William Henry Smith said in this House nine years ago, in the articles in which the production is practically unlimited, and not in the articles of which the production is practically limited. The fact is this—that the fall in these articles is due to foreign competition—(cheers)—and foreign competition is due, first, to peace, which has enabled greater industry to be used in their production; secondly, to the more efficient use of capital; thirdly, perhaps to the use of the telegraph; fourthly, to the vast extension of railways in new countries—in America, in the Argentine Republic, in Russia, and in India—which has brought the produce of these countries to the sea; lastly, and perhaps most of all, to the wonderful improvements in our mercantile marine, in the size of ships, in the cheapness of the working of marine engines, so that, in fact, the harvests of the world can now be brought from the places where they are produced to the very door of any country that may require them almost as cheaply as if they were produced in that country itself. . . . . I turn to what may be due to the fall in the price of silver. It has often been argued that the fall in the price of silver has brought Indian wheat into very serious competition with wheat grown in this country. That may be true to some extent, but this is a fact, that the imports of agricultural products from silver using countries are now only 2 per cent. of the total amount of agricultural produce imported into this country, which competes with agricultural produce grown at home, and the Indian harvests cannot be—both from the varying amount of their exportation, and from the total amount that could be exported—anything like as potent a factor in determining the price of wheat in the world as the harvests, for instance, of Russia or of the Argentine Republic. I find that in the year 1894 only half the amount of wheat was exported from British India that was exported in the previous year; and I find that the amount exported in 1894 was very little higher than the amount exported in 1877, when silver was nearly double the price at which it stood in 1894. (Cheers.) My hon. friend, who seconded this motion said a good deal about the effect of the low price of silver in silver-using countries in the East upon the competition of these countries with Lancashire. I think he referred mainly, if not entirely, to the cotton industry of Lancashire. I very much question whether other trades have complained of this competition, and if they have not I should very much like to know why. Why is it that the cotton industry of Lancashire is the particular trade that complains of this competition, because if there is this great importance attached to the bounty that may be due to the fall in the value of silver, surely it would apply to other trades besides the cotton industry? But this, at any rate, I believe to be the fact, that the cotton industry of Lancashire is not quite expiring. I am informed that the number of spindles and looms is increasing in Lancashire.

Mr. George Whiteley: It is very much less.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach: That is the information that has reached me. I am also informed that the wages of the operatives employed in the cotton industry are better than they were.

Mr. G. Whiteley: They are 10 per cent. below the standard list.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach: I believe the fact is that more of the profits of the industry go into the pockets of the operatives than before, and less into the pockets of the masters. That might be a fact to be regretted if it led masters to abandon the cotton industry. But why should they abandon the cotton industry? Is the trade with silver countries in the Lancashire cotton trade a losing one? If it is, I am curious to know why our exports of cotton goods to these silver-using countries is increasing by a percentage three times as large as the percentage of increase in the trade between Lancashire and other countries that are not silver-using. (Hear, hear.) I do not wish at all to underrate the importance, whatever it may be, of the fall in silver in the competition between Lancashire and the East in this matter, but I believe the danger of the competition—and I believe it to be a very real danger—is more due to other causes. I believe it is due, in the first place, to the fact that the cotton is nearer at hand there; in the second place, the fact that the market is on the spot; in the third place—and by far the greatest of all—to the extreme cheapness of the labour. That labour is probably made more cheap by the effect of the bounty on the fall in silver, and, therefore, the competition becomes harder. I admit to that extent that the fall in silver has been an evil. The fluctuations in the value between silver and gold have also been an evil owing to the difficulties which they have caused in the rate of exchange between gold-using and silver-using countries. We may wish, all of us, that there will be only one standard in the whole civilised world; but I am afraid that is a dream that is not likely to be realised. But even the influence, injurious though it may be, on commerce, of the fluctuations of the rate of exchange has certainly been minimised by the operations of the exchange banks. What, after all, is the great difficulty in this question as it affects ourselves, is the influence of the fall in silver upon the fortunes of our great dependency of India. I think it has always been admitted by all parties in this House, that the great fall of silver has been a serious evil and difficulty to the Government of India. A few years ago the Government of India took the step of closing the mints against the free coinage of silver. Since that time they have, to a great extent, achieved what I imagine was their object, in preventing the fall of the rupee. But there was this remarkable result—the price of silver has very largely fallen, and every year there is an increasing divergence between the market value of the coined rupee and the real value of the silver which is in that rupee. In fact,

India now has an inconvertible, appreciated currency. (Hear, hear.) That is not a position—however much relief it may have given for a time to the Government of India—which, I think, can be held to be a satisfactory or final solution of this great question. (Cheers.) I therefore do believe that, in the matters which I have alluded to, there are, as this motion states, evils affecting this country and our Indian empire in the present low value of silver, and we are perfectly ready, as we have always been to join with foreign countries in a conference as to the best way in which those evils may be alleviated. But I would wish to say that there was a part of the empire which is not included in the United Kingdom, and which is not included in India, which has great interests in this matter besides ourselves. I refer to our Colonial empire. (Hear, hear.) We have in the United Kingdom a population of 38,000,000. Our colonies have a population of 20,500,000. Of these no less than 15,500,000 are on the basis of a gold standard, with imports and exports, in 1893, of £227,500,000—four-fifths of the total colonial foreign trade. That includes all the great self-governing colonies, and the bulk of the Crown colonies. On the other hand, there are silver currency colonies, containing a population of 1,500,000 and with a trade of £48,000,000; and there are colonies with the peculiar rupee currency of India, containing a population of 3,500,000, and with a trade of £12,000,000. It is obvious that in dealing with this question, the interests of our gold-standard colonies cannot and ought not to be neglected. (Cheers.) And let the House remember that each and everyone of these colonies, whether it be a self-governing colony or a Crown colony, is, and I think always has been perfectly free to choose its own currency for itself. Therefore, vast as the population of India is, great as are the interests of our Indian empire, you have, I will venture to contend, even apart from the United Kingdom, enormous interests on the other side. (Hear, hear.) What is the policy which, as a Government, we intend to pursue? As I have said, we are willing, we are anxious, seeing that there are evils in the present low value of silver, and in the fluctuations in the value of the two metals, to enter into a conference, or into negotiations, which certainly I believe at the present stage would be much better than a conference, with other countries upon this subject, but we are not prepared to abandon the gold standard in the United Kingdom. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN, in the course of his speech, said: The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to indicate that poor India was to be stretched out on the rack again and vivisected for the benefit of the rest of mankind. He said that everybody agreed that the depreciation of silver had been a very great misfortune for India. They all agreed that it had been a great inconvenience to the Indian Government, but he demurred entirely to the proposition that it had been a calamity for the people of India or for the trade of that country generally. He regretted very much the experiment of closing the mints, for that was really giving encouargement to speculation in silver, and he feared that if another change was now introduced it would only lead to more gambling of the same kind. India had fully recovered from the effects of the closing of her mints. There had been a very remarkable expansion in the circulation of currency notes, which had taken, to a great degree, the place of rupees, and there had also been a large number of rupees brought into circulation from the hoards accumulated in India through many centuries. In that way the need of the country for a large currency had been supplied, and he did not think India was likely to be the gainer by any bargain that might be made for the opening of the Indian mints on condition that the Latin Union re-opened their mints. The hon. baronet the member for Manchester, being apparently gravelled for lack of matter, was kind enough to make a personal attack on him (Mr. Maclean), referring to a paper which he read fifteen years ago at the Society of Arts, in which he believed he stated, for the first time in England, it was a great mistake to suppose that, although the Government of India lost money on remittances to this country, that India, as a country, was adversely affected by bimetallism. He had studied this question in India for some years, where it was a popular subject for discussion long before it was adopted in this country. Speaking generally, he should say the study of bimetallism was a fascinating intellectual exercise for people of subtle minds with a strong taste for paradox. He was not of a metaphysical turn of mind himself, but he confessed the subject had great attractions for him, and coming fresh from India, where his business experience had been acquired, he devoted his paper mainly to the Indian aspect of the case, indicating his belief, towards the end, that what India gained had perhaps been lost by England. There were probably very few hon. members who could say that all the opinions of fifteen years ago were those which were held by them at the present moment, and he thought it some advantage to a man to have been able to survey the subject from different points of view. As he gained greater experience and knowledge of the course of trade of this country he certainly changed his opinion on this point, and he guarded himself to the extent that he said bimetallism was possible if they had a stable ratio agreed to by all countries and if the Government took under their own control the production of the silver in the mines, thereby making a Government monopoly of it. Those two conditions were impracticable and could not be carried out.

Mr. S. SMITH, in the course of his speech, said: He quite admitted that the present price of silver was not a proper price, and that it would never have fallen to 30d. but for the demonetisation and the closing of the mints. But still it was there, and the trade of the world had adjusted itself to its present position, and he did think that the nations that really desired to re-establish silver must do it at some different ratio. If asked his opinion as to the proper ratio, he should like to see it at a parity with 1s. 4d. for the rupee, which was the arrangement made when the mints were closed in India. Everyone knew that for twenty years the Indian Government had been struggling with financial difficulties, owing to the fluctuations in exchange and the immense fall in the value of the rupee. But he wanted to call attention to one great evil which had resulted from this state of things—that was the closing of the mints, which he believed was inevitable under the circumstances. He wished to point out that it was a very unfortunate thing that we required in India an artificial currency in place of an automatic currency; in other words, the value of the rupee in India was the metal of the coin, just as the value of the sovereign was the metal which represented it. We had been obliged to go in for an artificial currency, and now the rupee had increased in value to 20 per cent. more than the silver which composed it. There was a great danger of illicit coining. Indeed, he thought it was impossible to prevent rupees being smuggled into a country of so vast an extent as India, with many native States and so extended a seaboard, so long as an artificial value attached to the coins. The hon. member for Cardiff made a great deal of the activity of machine-makers in Oldham and Lancashire as a proof that the cotton industry was increasing. It was perfectly true that nearly all the machinery made in Lancashire went to foreign countries. There had been an immense demand for machinery for India, China, and Japan, and from all he could learn our great competitor in the future would be Japan. Undoubtedly one of the reasons which gave Japan a great advantage was that she was a silver country, and that the cost of production was much less than in Lancashire, which worked on the gold currency. That was the point to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer addressed his very able speech. It had been plain to him for many years that this country could not change its gold standard. He must admit that the difficulties were insuperable. Long habit, long tradition, the violent prejudices of the moneyed classes, and many other reasons, made it impossible that this country could give up its gold standard. That was no reason, however, why we should not give any help we could to other countries which had not anything like the reasons we had against setting up a bimetallic system. He believed in Germany a very little amount of encouragement would have a good effect, while in America the two sides were almost balanced, and a very little aid from this country might create a movement in favour of the bimetallic system. The great aid we could give was undoubtedly the reopening of the Indian mints, which was a very large undertaking, seeing that they would probably take about one-fourth or one-third of the entire silver production. He thought it was coming to be understood by the Powers of Europe that this was about as much as they could expect the British Empire to do.

Mr. G. WHITELEY, in the course of his speech said:—The Chancellor of the Exchequer asked how it was that the Lancashire cotton trade, of all trades in the United Kingdom, suffered so much from the appreciation of gold. It was because the export of cotton goods from Lancashire to India amounted to 62 per cent. of the total export of goods from this country. In the face of the serious competition in India

it was no wonder that Lancashire was the first to cry out. . . . It was urged against bimetallists that they were playing the game of silver-producing nations of the world, and of those countries which had large stocks of silver, and the question was asked whether we were going to constitute England the dumping ground for those nations. The United States possessed in sterling value 131 millions of silver as against 130 millions of gold. What advantage would the United States derive from bimetallism over the general average of mankind? In India there were 590 millions worth of silver, or more than one-sixth of the total production of the world during the last 400 years. When hon. members spoke of the possibility of our markets being flooded with silver they overlooked the fact that we were the holders of one-third of the silver of the world, so that we could shoot it into other countries as much as they could shoot it into this.

Mr. J. KENYON, in the course of his speech, said:—The hon. member for Stockport had argued that large quantities of silver would be sent to this country from the United States and that we should receive a benefit by sending over merchandise in exchange. Our experience of the United States would not support the conclusions of the hon. member; the people of the United States were quite ready to get as much as they could for their silver or raw material without considering the people to whom they sent either. Those who had not looked into the facts would be surprised to hear that out of the £150,000,000 only £3,100,000 came from silver-using countries while £1[illegible],000,000 came from those using either gold or inconvertible paper. It was not the fall in silver, but the fall in freights and the enormous development of railways that brought this increase of competition. The countries which sent us such great supplies of wheat were the United States, Southern Russia, Argentina, and India. In 1870 India had 5,000 miles of railways, she had now over 20,000; Southern Russia had 7,000, she had now 19,000; Argentina had 700, she had now 8,000; the United States had 53,000, they had now 176,000. Taken together, these four countries had in 1870, 66,000 miles; they had now 223,000, an increase of 157,000, which of course had opened up an immense territory. This was the true explanation, and the fall in silver had really nothing, or hardly anything to do with it. . . . . He saw no reason whatever for changing our currency, and overwhelming reasons against it. Was the country as a whole suffering? Were our trades and manufactures falling off? Certainly not. As regarded India the exports and imports, excluding Government stores and treasure amounted in 1873 (in tens of rupees) to £57,000,000, and in 1893-94 to £110,000,000. And how did we stand at home? As regarded the working classes, in 1873 there were 38 paupers in every 1,000, now there were only 23; the average rate of wages had risen from £43 8s. in 1873 to £53 16s. in 1891.

Mr. GEORGE WYNDHAM, in the course of his speech, said that, turning to the East, where silver and note paper was the currency, it would be found that, whereas the Argentine premium on gold was 250 per cent., it was 100 per cent. at Bombay. What was true in India was true all over the East. In that part of the world the prices of labour had not increased, and therefore, they could give their gold customers a reduction of 50 per cent. It was absurd to think that Lancashire by its pluck and industry could go on competing against places where labour was cheap and which obtained the advantage of 50 per cent. profit when they sold us their goods. . . . . He did not believe that the right hon. gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would maintain for a moment that the more our exports fell off, the happier we should be. In order to show the results of the existing system upon other industries he would take the case of tin. At the Straits Settlements tin could now be sold for £65 instead of £130, and it was stated that if silver continued to fall, those Settlements would be able to shut up every tin mine in Europe. Then again, with regard to coal, the cost of putting a ton of Japanese steam coal on board which used to be 16s. was now only 8s.; with regard to boots, Northampton had now lost the contract for supplying half the Indian army, in consequence of the fall in the price of silver.

Sir W. HARCOURT, in the course of his speech, said: It is said that India and the silver-using countries have such an advantage in dealing with other silver-using countries, but it is a very remarkable thing that the exports of India are very much larger to gold-using countries than they are to silver-using countries. It is also a remarkable fact, and this is contrary to the whole bimetallic theory, that the proportionate increase in our trade was much larger to the silver-using countries than it has been to the gold-using countries. (Hear, hear.) I find from the *Economist* of August 31st, 1895, that 14 per cent. of the increase of the exports of the whole trade was to silver-using countries in 1873, and in 1895 it was 22 per cent. This I will say about India, and I think it is a warning which the House ought to take. It is a very solemn warning which is given in the Report of the Royal Commission upon this subject. You affirm that the present system of currency is favourable to the industry of India. There is no doubt that is so. It may be unfavourable to the Indian Government in the exchange upon the home payments here, as we know it is. But your case is that it is a stimulant to industries in India; that it enables them to carry on trade which they did not carry on before. What is going to be the effect on India if this House is going to legislate deliberately with reference to the currency for the purpose of restraining and putting down those industries in India? The language held upon this subject in the Report of the Royal Commission is very well worthy of the attention of the House. They say that the effect on the Indian mind of leading them to believe that one of the objects of the change in the currency is to attack an industry which you regard as a rival to your own is one which will naturally produce immense discontent there. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, in the course of his speech said:—The right hon. gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) told us that, holding as we do that the present condition of exchange between England and India afforded an artificial stimulus—a stimulus, he did not say artificial, though I think it is—to Indian manufactures, we should ask what would be thought of our policy by the Indian population if we deliberately adopted a new system under which that stimulus to Indian manufactures would be put an end to. That might be a good argument from some points of view, but it is not from that of the right hon. gentleman, for he was a member of the Government which forced upon India an artificial currency, which tampered with Indian currency, which tampered with the currency of 200 millions of Her Majesty's subjects for the deliberate, avowed, and openly expressed purpose of raising the value of the rupee above the market price, with the inevitable result, in so far as it was raised thus artificially, that the stimulus to Indian exports would be diminished. I think I am absolved from dealing with that argument when it proceeded from a gentleman who has done more than anyone to prove its futility. . . . . The Chancellor of the Exchequer recalled to the memory of the House the ludicrous fact that, at the present moment, within the limits of this one Empire, men's debts are measured by three different standards. They suffer from alteration by three different sets of causes, and they are subject to variations from influences arising from three different quarters. You have a gold standard in this country, and a silver standard in the Straits Settlements, and in those two countries the demand for gold and the demand for silver respectively depends on how the debt which is to be liquidated [illegible] contracted. And in India there is a third standard [illegible] a demand for gold or a demand for silver, but a [illegible] that anomalous article invented by the right hon. [illegible] opposite, imposed by him on the 200,000,000 of our [illegible] jects in India, and differing from both the gold a[illegible] standards. (Cheers.) Nothing shall persuade me [illegible] conformity with civilisation and common sense that the commercial world should long tolerate so inconvenient, cruel, and absurd a system. (Cheers.)

The resolution was ultimately agreed to without a division.

March 19th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE CABUL TREATY.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, when presenting to the House a copy of the Cabul Treaty, he would also include copies of the communications relating to it from the time when the agreement was drafted up to the time when the treaty was ratified and the arrangements completed.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The arrangements for delimitation arising out of the Cabul Agreement are not yet all com-

plete or ratified, but when these several agreements have been executed, I shall be glad to place copies of them on the Table.

THE PATNA AND JHALAWAR CASES.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was now in a position to place upon the Table papers relating to the suicide of the late Máháràja of Patna, and the deposition of the Máháràja of Jhalawar.

Lord George Hamilton: I have already informed the hon. member that I do not think it necessary to make any further enquiry as to the death of the late Máháràja of Patna, nor do I propose to lay on the Table papers relating to this subject. As regards the Máháràja of Jhalawar, the report of the Government of India has not yet been received. When it arrives, I will consider what papers can be laid on the Table of the House.

HOSPITALS AT ADEN.

Mr. Moon asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was aware that there was no trained nursing staff in any of the hospitals at Aden, so that the garrison there was at a disadvantage compared with other garrisons under the Government of India; and that one of such hospitals was a general European hospital, in charge of a civil surgeon, to which patients were brought from ships of all nations:

Whether he would communicate with the Resident at Aden and request suggestions for remedying the above deficiency:

And whether he would ascertain the amount of support given to the general hospital by mercantile shipping companies.

Lord George Hamilton: I am aware of the facts stated by the hon. member, but I may observe that there are several garrisons in India to which no trained European nursing staff is attached. I will communicate with the Government of India as to the suggestions made by the hon. member.

LAND REVENUE ASSESSMENT IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India whether it was the fact, as stated in the Madras Land Revenue Reports, that in the Madras Presidency, during the 12 years 1879-80 to 1890-1, 850,528 tenants of the State had, for the collection of the land revenue, their lands sold by auction to the extent of 1,984,985 acres, and that of this area 1,183,851 acres were bought in by the Government for want of bidders at the auctions:

Whether, in the years 1890-91, 1891-2, 1892-3, and 1893-4, the number of State tenants thus sold up was 10,115, 11,118, 12,400, and 14,198 respectively:

Whether, in the year 1893-4, property, personal and real, of defaulting tenants, of the estimated value of 795,922 rupees, was put up to sale, and under forced sales realised only 209,638 rupees; and whether out of this amount property valued at 25,592 rupees was bought in by the Government for 2,300 rupees:

Wh[illegible]her, with reference to the evictions noticed in Sir R[illegible]emple's speech on the Indian Budget in 1892, the [illegible]tate in 1893 called upon the Madras Government [illegible], and whether that report had yet been received:

[illegible]r nearly 3½ million acres of assessed culturable land [illegible]lying waste in the Madras Presidency:

[illegible] in the year 1893-4, 5,374,303 notices of demand for land revenue were issued, and 209,517 notices for sale of property, and whether fees upon these notices were levied from defaulters:

And, whether, looking to the above facts, he would cause special enquiry to be made with a view to an improved system of land revenue assessment and collection in the Madras Presidency.

Lord George Hamilton: I cannot trace any reference to Madras evictions in the speech of my right hon. friend, Sir Richard Temple, on the Indian Budget in 1892, but it is the case that my predecessor invited the Government of Madras to report whether some improvement could not be introduced in the method of dealing with land revenue defaulters. I learn from Madras that the Government are considering the matter and hope to report shortly. When the report is received the matter will receive the careful attention of the Secretary of State in Council.

I do not propose to trouble the House with remarks on all the figures cited in the question; some of those figures I have been able to identify in the reports of the Madras Revenue Board, while others appear to be incorrect. But I may add that the subject has been receiving much attention in Madras for some years past; and the "number of revenue defaulters in Madras whose property, real and personal, was sold for arrears" had been reduced from 130,714 in 1883 to 10,115 in 1890.

March 20th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.)

On the motion of Sir Henry Fowler an Address was granted for a Return of the net income and expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1884 to 1894-5.

March 23rd.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

AMMUNITION IN INDIA.

Colonel Lockwood asked the Secretary of State for India if the reserve of ammunition in India was mainly composed of black powder:

And what per cent. o cartridges were there of black powder over cordite.

Lord G. Hamilton As cordite has not been issued to the Native army, the reserve of ammunition in India is mainly composed of black powder.

I am afraid I cannot say what is the percentage of such cartridges over those made of cordite.

KAFIRISTAN.

Mr. Arthur Pease asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Government had information as to recent military operations by the Afghans in Kafiristan:

And whether they would make representations to the Government of the Amír with regard to the slaughter and enslavement of the Kafirs.

Lord G. Hamilton: I received intelligence early this month that the Sipah Salar had again left Asmar for the Wai Valley with a force, and that the Ramgul Valley in the west of Kafiristan had been occupied after severe fighting by troops sent from Kabul. I have no later information which I can regard as trustworthy.

In accordance with the undertaking which I gave on the 3rd March, a communication was made to the Viceroy, who will use any favourable opportunity of exercising his good offices on behalf of the Amír's Kafir subjects; but I am afraid that under the circumstances I cannot promise more than this.

March 24th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

Mr. Henniker Heaton asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that considerable dissatisfaction still existed among officers of the Indian Staff Corps in consequence of their supersession by the line:

Whether he was aware that the concession of temporary rank to commandants and seconds in command of native regiments did not appreciably prevent their supersession by the line (seeing that officers having permanent rank took precedence of all those serving with them having temporary rank of the same grade), while it created wholesale supersession among staff corps officers themselves:

And, whether he would ask the War Office to reconsider the decision arrived at last year, so as to meet the views expressed by Lord Lansdowne, on behalf of the Government of India, as shown in the Return presented to this House last Session, entitled East India (Staff Corps Officers).

Lord G. Hamilton: No further representation from the Government of India has been received on the subject to which my honourable friend refers, and in the absence of any such representation I do not propose to reopen the question.